

New York State Professional Standards and Practices Board
Project: Development of New York State Professional Learning Standards

Preamble/Introduction

Ensuring Consistent High Quality Professional Learning Leading to Improved Student Outcomes

New York State’s Professional Learning Standards provide a blueprint for high-quality professional learning for all educators to improve outcomes that address the diversity of all students. Building on their knowledge and experiences, professional educators need to engage in on-going, sustained and continuous development, including an examination of practice as part of a lifelong professional pursuit of learning. These reflective practices are an integral component of the education profession. The professional learning standards are aspirational, sometimes providing a description of what is expected, while framing a vision of advancement by articulating clearly defined expectations and indicators of professional learning. The standards, as defined by the domains and quality indicators, will provide a framework that develops professional knowledge for learning and leading. They are grounded in the core belief that the most appropriate content for professional learning is contextual: the content needs to fit the needs of the individual and their educational context. Through the utilization of these standards, educators have the opportunity to take an active role over their own professional learning.

This document gives participants and providers a framework for professional learning. The intent is not to prescribe the specific content nor instructional strategies of that professional learning, as all content and structure should be dictated by local needs, regulatory needs, and district Professional Development plans. This document is intended for all educators who are employed in a P12 setting (e.g., principals, teaching assistants, teachers, teacher leaders, school psychologists, and specialists). This framework is a holistic approach to planning and reviewing professional learning, and not a checklist to apply to every professional learning experience.

The New York State Professional Learning Standards are based on an analysis and adaptation of the New York State Professional Development Standards (2009), Learning Forward Standards, as well as other national, state, and professional standards. The standards reference the importance of all stakeholders, including P-12 staff, parents, social workers, counselors, community members, teacher educators, higher education representatives and students.

Seven Domains

- A. **Professional Growth and Collaboration.** Professional learning fosters a foundation of continuous professional growth characterized by collaborative relationships, reflection, respect, and commitment to student and educator learning. Professional learning for professional growth and collaboration:
1. is ongoing, sustained, and supported from a systemic approach.
 2. ensures that educators have the tools and opportunity to collaborate in a respectful and trusting environment.

3. increases educator effectiveness for all students and occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and progress towards goals.
4. develops a culture for systemic shifts over time based on vision, growth, and collaboration.
5. focuses on the local school culture and individual needs of educators.
6. encompasses all stakeholders to create a vision for prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating professional learning.
7. includes a support system for change not only within a school system, but also with relevant stakeholders and professional organizations.

B. Expanding Professional Capacity. Professional learning builds individual and collective capacity for deepening and expanding educator expertise and improving outcomes for all students. Professional learning for expanding professional capacity:

1. deepens educator knowledge of the local and individual needs of students.
2. prepares educators to read, understand, apply, and/or conduct research and use data for informed decision-making.
3. leads to individual and collective approaches to sustain the long-term importance and relevance of professional learning.
4. leads to more effective and sustainable learning communities.
5. equips educators to identify and address problems of practice.
6. grows educator content and pedagogical content knowledge.
7. prepares educators to access and apply available resources.
8. encourages educators to reflect, identify and address areas for personal and professional growth.

C. Leadership. Professional learning develops and fosters skillful leaders who cultivate vision, capacity, advocacy, communication, and support systems. Professional learning for leadership:

1. includes teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators, at all levels who build a vision for professional learning.
2. emphasizes continuous learning, and capacity building to learn and lead for professional learning.
3. necessitates a thorough understanding of curriculum and instruction, effective and relevant practices and research, data, management, resources and budget.
4. demonstrates a commitment to P-20 collaboration, and coordination among all stakeholders.
5. prioritizes resources through a decision making process that engages appropriate stakeholders in determining needs and effectiveness of professional learning.
6. coordinates and assesses professional learning in ways that effectively utilize resources and ensure equity.
7. uses understandings of policy and complex systems to support change and growth of organizational frameworks for professional learning.
8. capitalizes on peer coaching/mentoring to support new educators as they incorporate new strategies into their educational setting.

D. Professional Learning Approaches. Professional learning integrates theories, research, and models of adult learning to achieve intended outcomes. Professional learning approaches:

1. are goal oriented and engage in authentic problem solving and decision making.
2. provide feedback, ongoing assessment and an opportunity for professional reflection.
3. integrate appropriate technology to enhance and expand professional learning experiences.
4. are research guided and informed by local needs and demographics, providing context and relevance for all stakeholders.
5. incorporate diverse modes of teaching and learning strategies.
6. foster participatory engagement.
7. provide choice, differentiated instruction, individualized learning, and/or role or content specific options.
8. give consideration to alternative opportunities for individual educators to develop further expertise.
9. should be aligned to professional and/or content standard and translate theory to practice.
10. provide sustained experiences over time with continued support and opportunities.

E. Utilizing Data. Professional learning incorporates a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to monitor student progress, sustain professional growth, and inform, plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning. Professional learning utilizing data:

1. emphasizes the use of student pre and post assessments; formal and informal teacher and administrator evaluations; teacher, school, or state collected data; needs assessments; informal surveys; and community input.
2. examines disaggregated student data by race, gender, English language learning, special needs, eligibility for free or reduced lunch and other factors.
3. needs to be relevant and appropriate to the context and population of students both culturally and demographically and to be evaluated for bias and cultural sensitivity.
4. is informed by a needs assessment, shaped by ongoing feedback throughout the experience, and evaluated for the professional learning impact.

F. Cultural Responsiveness. Professional learning responds to a culturally and linguistically diverse population of learners and promotes academic and social-emotional growth by emphasizing and building upon their cultural strengths, knowledge, and skills. Professional learning for enhancing cultural responsiveness:

1. reflects on cultural self-awareness to help recognize one's own biases.
2. addresses the differing expectations and bias sometimes associated with culturally and linguistically diverse students by holding high expectations for all students accompanied by accessible and meaningful supports.
3. provides increased capacity for an on-going commitment to recognize, engage, and incorporate diverse cultures and backgrounds as assets for learning.
4. supports educators in developing safe, secure, affirming, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students.

G. Engagement Among Diverse Communities. Professional learning builds capacity for educators, families, community members, and other stakeholders for shared ownership of student and community success. Professional learning for engagement among diverse communities:

1. fosters dialogue and effective means of communication within and among families, community members and other relevant stakeholders to increase understandings of diversity and culture.
2. assists educators with the knowledge, skill, and opportunity to meet the diverse learning needs of all students, and to engage and collaborate with parents, families, and other community members as active partners in the education of children and young adults.
3. develops understanding and continued learning about modern society, in which there are ever increasing connections and benefits of cross-cultural and international collaborations.
4. appropriately and effectively supports educators with professional learning to tap into resources within the geographic communities to support students, families, and educators.
5. promotes a respectful understanding of cultural, language, and socioeconomic issues affecting families in the local community and aligns resources to support unique demographics of community.
6. encourages partnerships among schools, higher education, community organizations, and cultural institutions that benefit students and families.
7. considers current events and policy to proactively prepare for changes that may raise new challenges and opportunities.